



Department  
of Health

# Taking Forward Professor Croisdale-Appleby's Review of Social Work Education

*Re-visioning Social Work Education: A Department  
of Health Update*

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# Taking Forward Professor Croisdale-Appleby's Review of Social Work Education

*Re-visioning Social Work Education: A Department of Health Update*

**Prepared by Workforce Development, Strategy and External Relations Directorate.**

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# Executive summary

The purpose of this document is to provide the sector with an update on the Department's current thinking and actions in response to Professor Croisdale-Appleby's review of social work education.<sup>1</sup> These are relatively early days but significant progress is being made.

The Department of Health (Department) and the Department for Education (DfE) have joint responsibility for improving social work qualifying courses and continuing professional development, with specific focus on adult and children's social work respectively. The Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) has responsibilities over the approval of social worker qualifying courses and quality assuring continuing professional development.

The Department is making progress as follows by:

- commissioning the College of Social Work (TCSW) to develop a proposal for a continuing professional development (CPD) framework;
- commissioning TCSW to develop CPD materials for specific areas (e.g. dementia, autism, mental capacity act, best interest assessors);
- consulting on a Knowledge and Skills Statement (KSS) for Social Work with adults, to mirror the Children's Knowledge and Skills Statement published by the DfE;
- continuing to fund the Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (ASYE) via Skills for Care (SfC);
- consulting on a national consistent assessment at the end of ASYE for social work with adults;
- reviewing the way the social work education funding is deployed;
- developing proposals with DfE on how formal teaching partnerships between employers and higher education institutions (HEIs) can be developed and tested;
- progressing the Think Ahead programme; and
- working with SfC and the Centre for Workforce Intelligence (CfWI) to improve the understanding of supply and demand for the social work profession as a whole.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/social-work-education-review>

We continue to work with DfE on their reforms to child and family social work education and training to ensure an approach to social work reform that is consistent but factors in the differences between adult and child and family social work.

## Background

In April 2013, the Minister for Care and Support commissioned Professor Croisdale-Appleby to undertake a review of social work education and to consider whether (a) social work education, as it is currently structured and operates, produces practitioners of high quality, and (b) whether the Government's investment in social work education is providing the high quality social workers that our society deserves and needs.

*Re-visioning Social Work Education: an independent review* was published in February 2014. Professor Croisdale-Appleby's recommendations cover the complete spectrum of social work education in England, from selection of students for qualifying courses and their education in an HEI and work-based practice placements during the course, leading to their formal qualification and protected title as a Social Worker. This continues into their education as a newly qualified social worker in the ASYE, and the recommendation to ensure professional competence through its formal assessment in the workplace through creating a Licence to Practise without which they would not be authorised to work professionally as a social worker and their subsequent revalidation with an increased emphasis on continuing professional development.

In particular, Professor Croisdale-Appleby drew attention to the complexity of social work, emphasising the need for social work education to recognise this and to equip practitioners with both the practical capability and theoretical knowledge to carry out high quality social work. He developed this into a new and visionary view of social work education in which the social worker is considered as a practitioner, a professional and a social scientist, a view which the Department believes creates a new foundation upon which future social work education can be built.

Sir Martin Narey was separately commissioned by the Secretary of State for Education in 2013 to review social work education and training for children and families social work. His recommendations relate specifically to preparation for child and family social work.<sup>2</sup> The Department is working with DfE to meet the aspirations of both reviews on improving social work qualifying courses and post qualification arrangements, ensuring consistency but allowing flexibility to factor in the differences between adult and children's social work.

The Department of Health intends to publish a further update on reforming social work education in a year's time.

Chapters 1 and 2 set out the Department's current approach to taking forward the recommendations on social work qualifying courses and post qualification education and training respectively. Chapter 3 focusses on funding and workforce planning. Annexes 1 and 2 contain Professor Croisdale-Appleby's Terms of Reference and recommendations respectively. Annex 3 provides a glossary.

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<sup>2</sup>[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/287756/Making\\_the\\_education\\_of\\_social\\_workers\\_consistently\\_effective.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/287756/Making_the_education_of_social_workers_consistently_effective.pdf)

# Chapter 1: Social Worker Qualifying Courses

Professor Croisdale-Appleby made 22 recommendations in total, more than half of which are about social work qualifying courses. These include the approval process for qualifying courses as well as the admissions criteria and process, curricula, practice placements and innovative routes into social work. The Department's current thinking on these issues is set out in this chapter.

## Approval of Social Worker Qualifying Courses

Both Professor Croisdale-Appleby's and Sir Martin Narey's reviews highlight the need for a more coherent, seamless and rigorous system both in terms of standards and processes.

Government is currently working with HCPC on proposals to strengthen its regulation of social work education. Government policy is that there should be a clear separation of roles and responsibilities between the regulator and professional body.<sup>3</sup> The priorities for Government are that service user safety is provided through the effective regulation of social workers and that public confidence is maintained in the social work profession. Inherent in these is the need for social worker qualifying courses to be fit for purpose. Government is therefore in discussions with HCPC about making improvements to the approval process for social work qualifying courses within the current legislative framework and the timescales for doing so.

Government is also discussing with HCPC how it can most effectively influence changes to admissions criteria and processes, curricula and improvements to placements, all of which are the subject of specific, evidenced recommendations in the Croisdale-Appleby review. (Recommendations 2, 3, 4 and 5 address admission requirements; 8, 9 and 10 address curricula matters; 11, 17, 18 and 19 address improvements in practice placements).

## TCSW Endorsement Programme

TCSW (working with stakeholders) developed an endorsement scheme for social work qualifying courses. It is a voluntary scheme for HEIs and aims to promote and celebrate high quality education and training, over and above the standards required by the HCPC. To date, 81 programmes (from 42 different HEIs) have been endorsed, with 64% having to do further work or supply additional information. Government provides a contribution to the costs of the endorsement programme with HEIs paying £500 per programme. At the present time, no decision has been made as to whether Government should continue to fund the TCSW

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/enabling-excellence-autonomy-and-accountability-for-health-and-social-care-staff>



endorsement programme beyond the 2014 academic year. A decision would be made on the merits of the endorsement programme, the quality and the fit with wider regulatory reform.

## Admissions

To meet the ambition to recruit the best and brightest into social work, Government agrees that there is a need to ensure the academic rigour of students through consistently high admissions criteria. Currently university admissions criteria for undergraduate social work qualifying courses differ between universities, with the UCAS points criteria varying from 240 points to 320 points.<sup>4</sup>

There is scope to strengthen selection procedures, for instance, the use of admissions methodologies such as the Graduate Management Admissions Test (GMAT) in Business School Education was referred to by Professor Croisdale-Appleby in his Review as a proven methodology for ensuring more coherence in the selection process across HEIs (Recommendation 2). Looking to the future, there is also scope within the recommendations made by the Law Commission on reforming professional regulation legislation for regulators to set national tests and the Department would be keen to explore the admissions process for social worker qualifying courses to include national assessment and selection criteria.<sup>5</sup> The Department believes there is potential for a test to be developed based on social care values (including compassion, dignity, integrity, respect and responsibility) as these are what make the difference in delivery of care and support services.

## Placements

Government agrees with Professor Croisdale-Appleby and Sir Martin Narey that practice placements are vitally important for students looking to progress into the social work profession. It shares the aspiration that all students should have the opportunity to undertake placements involving the use of statutory interventions, and that placements should be available in a variety of settings reflecting the changing landscape of health and social care. Professor Croisdale-Appleby goes as far as to state (in Recommendation 6) that: *"The greatest opportunity to improve the quality of social work education lies in having a sufficient number of practice placements of the highest quality and the educational supervision necessary to ensure their potential is delivered."* This was also stressed in Sir Martin Narey's review.

Government also agrees with Professor Croisdale-Appleby that practice educators play a vital role in practice placements and will be discussing with the sector how the skills of practice educators and supervisors can be developed to a consistent high standard to improve the quality of the education and training provided in the placement. For example, the Department may want to consider commissioning updated curriculum guidance for post qualification practice educator courses and to build upon the existing standards for Practice Educators and

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<sup>4</sup> <http://unistats.direct.gov.uk>

<sup>5</sup> Law Commission; Scottish Law Commission; Northern Ireland Law Commission, "Regulation of Health Care Professionals; Regulation of Social Care Professionals in England", presented to Parliament by the Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice by command of Her Majesty; Laid before the Scottish Parliament by the Scottish Ministers; Laid before the Northern Ireland Assembly by the Department of Justice April 2014 Cm8339, SG/2014/26 [http://lawcommission.justice.gov.uk/docs/lc345\\_regulation\\_of\\_healthcare\\_professionals.pdf](http://lawcommission.justice.gov.uk/docs/lc345_regulation_of_healthcare_professionals.pdf)

supervisors, developed by the Social Work Reform Board and held by TCSW and the Local Government Association respectively. Government is also discussing with the sector how the quality of placements can be further improved through incentives within the placement funding regime, in line with recommendations 17, 19 and 22.

## Curricula and Knowledge and Skills

Government wants to see high quality social work qualifying courses which equip students through academic learning and placement experience to work effectively in their chosen setting.

TCSW has produced a series of curricular guidance with social work educators and the Higher Education Academy to support curriculum development, educators in HEIs, practice educators and employer representatives. The guides should be considered in conjunction with the SOPs, Professional Capabilities Framework (PCF) and the QAA Benchmark Statement for Social Work.<sup>6, 7</sup> The guides can be used to help educators develop complete Modules, part Modules, single sessions, or an embedded approach to specific topics.

In his review, Sir Martin Narey stressed that there are a number of standards for social work education but that none of them set out a clear statement of the knowledge and skills that a social worker needed to become an effective practitioner.<sup>8</sup> He recommended that such a statement should be drafted by the Chief Social Worker for Children and Families. The DfE has consulted on a draft Knowledge and Skills Statement for Child and Family Social Work, following this recommendation.<sup>9</sup> The Chief Social Worker for Adults has also drafted a Knowledge and Skills Statement (KSS) for Social Work with Adults and is also consulting the sector.<sup>10</sup> The purpose of the statement is to set out what a social worker working in adult services needs to know and be able to do. It is not a curriculum guide but social work qualifying courses are encouraged to review their curricula against it. The KSS include common skills and knowledge across children, families and individuals. Government will explore with HCPC and TCSW how the KSSs should be mapped against the SOPs, SETs, and the PCF.<sup>11</sup>

Professor Croisdale-Appleby recommended (recommendations 9, 13 and 14) that social work qualifying courses should equip all newly qualified social workers to work competently in any setting, with knowledge and experience of the differences between adult and child and family social work. Government would like more graduates of qualifying courses to be closer to 'practice ready', able to operate competently in front line practice at the point they become an NQSW; and continues to work with the regulator, higher education institutions and employers in

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<sup>6</sup> <http://www.tcsw.org.uk/pcf.aspx>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www3.shu.ac.uk/HWB/placements/SocialWork/documents/QAABenchmarkstatementsw.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/287756/Making\\_the\\_education\\_of\\_social\\_workers\\_consistently\\_effective.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/287756/Making_the_education_of_social_workers_consistently_effective.pdf)

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/knowledge-and-skills-for-child-and-family-social-work>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/adult-social-work-knowledge-and-skills>

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.hcpc-uk.org.uk/>

that regard. But, in recognition of the different skills and knowledge required to work competently in different settings, the Government is also working with employers to strengthen the approach to high quality induction, supervision and continuing professional development and piloting a new required accredited status for those wishing to work in particular statutory settings.

## Innovative Routes

Professor Croisdale-Appleby recommended that: *“Encouragement should be given to provide innovative routes to social work qualification, such as fast track routes, and high expectations set so that they will enhance the overall quality of students at the point of qualification”* (Recommendation 13).

In line with this, the Department continues to progress the Think Ahead programme. The programme was launched by the Minister for Care and Support in May 2014 and is designed to attract high calibre individuals into employment as social workers within mental health integrated teams. The programme will develop participants' practice capabilities and leadership skills, with a special focus on how to work effectively within integrated teams. It is intended to provide a cadre of social workers who are able to lead the integration agenda, as well as address concerns about recruitment and progression in the area of mental health. Aiming to begin recruiting participants during 2015 in order to begin their programme in summer 2016, Think Ahead will be a two-year training scheme which aims to deliberately shift the balance of social work education further towards practical experience of working with service users than currently exists via traditional route. There could be additional modules in the second year of the programme to specialise in areas such as pre-AMHP training, Best Interest Assessment, or the mental health needs of older people. A key milestone for the Think Ahead programme will be seeking HCPC approval as a social work qualifying course.

DfE continues with Frontline and Step Up to Social Work, its fast-track routes into child and family social work, which have been built on similar principles to those of the Think Ahead programme.<sup>12,13</sup>

## Conclusion

Raising the quality of entry to the social work profession, the quality of the qualifying programmes and the availability and quality of placements are key aims of Government. Government is currently in the process of developing the Knowledge and Skills statements for both adults' and children's social work, which set out expectations for what social workers need to know and be able to do. Government expects the statements to shape the content and quality of qualifying courses. Government is also developing and supporting innovative fast-track routes into social work for candidates with high potential. More detailed proposals for high quality placements are set out in chapter 3.

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<sup>12</sup> <http://www.thefrontline.org.uk/>

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/supporting-social-workers-to-provide-help-and-protection-to-children/supporting-pages/canparent-trial>

## Chapter 2: Post Qualification Arrangements

Professor Croisdale-Appleby made a number of recommendations (recommendations 15, 16, 20, 21 and 22) about the post qualification education and training arrangements for social workers. Government's view is that improvements need to be made to qualifying courses but maintaining and improving the skill levels of existing social workers is of equal importance.

### Continuing Professional Development

CPD is a structured approach to learning to help ensure competence to practice, taking in knowledge, skills and practical experience. CPD can involve any relevant learning activity, whether formal and structured or informal and self-directed.

Government agrees with Professor Croisdale-Appleby that a comprehensive CPD framework that encourages social workers to develop their careers on an on-going basis is needed (Recommendation 20). The Government's view is that responsibility for ensuring that knowledge, skills and practice are kept up to date is the responsibility of the individual practitioner supported by their employer. This is also a regulatory requirement, as social workers need to demonstrate to HCPC that they have kept their knowledge, skills and practice up to date when they re-register.

The Department has commissioned TCSW to develop a proposed model for a CPD framework. The starting point is that the KSSs and PCF should form the basis of the CPD framework, as they set out the key capabilities for social workers at all levels of their career. TCSW will produce an initial discussion paper to inform a number of consultation events with key organisations and individuals. The purpose of these events would be to engage the sector in the consideration of CPD and to gather views on key priority areas for action. TCSW would then submit a proposal for a CPD framework to the Department and DfE, which will play an active role in discussions going forward. In parallel, TCSW will set out the arguments for investment in CPD for social work, highlighting key business benefits and a business case for employers. This would draw on the work already undertaken on the business case for social work in adult services, as well as other business case models.

The Department has commissioned TCSW to develop CPD materials in the current financial year in the following areas:

- **Best Interest Assessors (BIA):** TCSW has developed a BIA endorsement scheme which will be part of TCSW CPD endorsement scheme with specific criteria and requirements aligned to the BIA capabilities and statutory requirements for the role.<sup>14</sup> The scheme will include a self-assessment process, through which providers will submit a range of evidence to demonstrate their application of the criteria for endorsement. A visit to the programme provider will be used to verify the evidence submitted and to hear

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<sup>14</sup> [http://www.tcsw.org.uk/uploadedFiles/TheCollege/CollegeLibrary/Reform\\_resources/BIA%20capabilities.pdf](http://www.tcsw.org.uk/uploadedFiles/TheCollege/CollegeLibrary/Reform_resources/BIA%20capabilities.pdf)

the views of partners. A range of guidance materials has been developed to support providers in their applications. Materials include Specific application and review forms for the BIA programme route, Application Guide, Training and support materials for reviewers, including review and visit templates and scheme manual.

- **Autism:** Taking the refresh of the autism strategy as the starting point, this project will explore the learning needs of all social workers in relation to autism across the age ranges.<sup>15</sup> The project will develop curriculum guidance, which will draw on workshops with social workers and their managers, considering what the current level of knowledge is, identifying gaps and priorities for action and a review of current relevant literature to investigate what information is currently available and its accessibility and usefulness for social work.
- **The Mental Capacity Act:** TCSW will develop a curriculum guide to set out the learning outcomes, knowledge, skills and values linked to the levels of the PCF. A comprehensive resource guide would also be included. This guide would inform the teaching on mental capacity in qualifying programmes as well as CPD for those already in the workforce. It would also support social workers and their managers to evaluate their capability in this area and plan their development. It would also be of use to commissioners of workforce development.
- **Dementia:** Social workers have expressed concern that people who may be showing early signs of dementia or other cognitive impairments are unable to access the right services and are not being signposted to appropriate help and support. This is compounded by a lack of suitable guidance specifically aimed at social workers to help them understand the sorts of behaviours which may indicate the early stages of dementia and the approaches and services which can help. The Chief Social Worker for Adults and TCSW are developing targeted advice for social workers to support people with dementia, both pre- and post-diagnosis. This guidance should increase awareness of cognitive impairments and the skills and behaviours social workers will need; provide an additional source of good practice for safeguarding and working with capacity; and support continuous professional development, which will inform a more detailed curriculum guide to address the learning needs of social workers in relation to dementia.

DfE has previously commissioned RIP, BAAF and TCSW to develop training and CPD curricula for Fostering and Adoption.

In respect of other roles, the initial thinking is that in 2015/16 Government will want to develop the role of practice educator by building on the existing Practice Educator Professional Standards. Work to develop the role of Clinical Supervisor will also be explored.

### **Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (ASYE) and Licence to Practise**

Government agrees with the principle of a national consistent process to develop key knowledge and skills at the end of the first year in practice. It continues to fund the ASYE

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<sup>15</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/think-autism-an-update-to-the-government-adult-autism-strategy>

programme for all new social workers in England. The Department provides funding to Skills for Care to support employers of newly qualified social workers (NQSWs) who registered with Skills for Care for the adult ASYE programme. DfE funds the equivalent programme for NQSWs in the child and family sector.

Government would like to see employers using social workers who have successfully completed the ASYE and have passed a rigorous test or assessment relevant for their setting. Accordingly the Department of Health supports Professor Croisdale-Appleby's Recommendation<sup>16</sup> that the current ASYE programme should be extended in scope to include all NQSWs entering practice in social work with adults, concluding that whilst improving social work qualifying courses will over time produce essential benefits, there is also a need to ensure that NQSWs make a smooth transition from education to employment to become an effective social work with adults practitioner as early as possible. To this end, the Department is working with Skills for Care and TCSW to develop a national consistent assessment process for social workers with adults and set of criteria for assessment of social workers in adult settings at the end of the ASYE

Likewise, the Department for Education is developing the Approved Child and Family Practitioner (ACFP) status for child and family social workers at the end of their NQSW year, with a test based on the Knowledge and Skills for Child and Family Social Work. The pilot of the ACFP will be launched in 2015 and will lay the ground for the potential roll out of the system for child and family social workers after evaluation. The Department of Health will be looking to learn the lessons from the DfE ACFP pilot.

The Government notes Professor Croisdale-Appleby's recommendation that, to raise the quality of practice and level of public confidence in the social work profession, a Licence to Practise should be developed and that the ASYE should be bolstered to indicate such a direction of travel. Government wishes to raise practice quality and public confidence quickly through strengthening the ASYE and piloting the ACFP from 2015. The introduction of a Licence to Practise would however require primary legislation, and would be subject to scrutiny of a detailed proposal including quantification of costs and benefits.

### **Conclusion**

Government agrees with Professor Croisdale-Appleby that a comprehensive CPD framework needs to be developed and has started to work with TCSW to do so. A particular focus for Government is the development of knowledge and skills for both child and family social workers and adult social workers during the ASYE year and the quality of support required for them to reach the standards expected after twelve months.



## Chapter 3: Social Work Education Funding and Workforce Planning

In his concluding recommendation (number 22), Professor Croisdale-Appleby recommended that funding for the undergraduate (UG) bursary be reduced whilst funding for the postgraduate (PG) bursary be maintained; funding for practice placements be increased; and investment in CPD and workforce planning be increased.

### Social Work Education Funding

Government wishes to use social work education funding to drive high quality practice placements for student social workers. The Department consulted on reforming the social work bursary and the education support grant (ESG), which includes the practice placement funding, in 2012 and 2013 respectively.<sup>16,17</sup> The result was that:

- the number of bursaries was capped with HEIs shortlisting students for a bursary;
- the availability of the UG bursary was reduced to years two and three;
- a Practice Travel Allowance for non-bursary recipients for UGs and PGs was introduced;
- the PG bursary was maintained;
- a new ESG fee structure was introduced as an interim measure for the 2014 academic year in order to allow the Department to bring the reduced budget under control and to allow consideration of the reviews of social work education:
  - the daily placement fees for statutory and non-statutory placements were combined to a single fee of £20 per placement day;
  - the fee for skills development days was reduced to £10 per day;
  - the HEI administration fee and funding for the service and user carer involvement in the development and delivery of the degree were maintained at the previous level; and
- the social work education budget reduced from £101m in 2011/12 to £90.75m in 2014/15 financial year (FY).

In support of Professor Croisdale-Appleby's recommendation, a number of stakeholders have suggested that the placement funding be increased following the 2014 ESG fee changes. The aim is to do this but at the moment the Department is unable to say by how much or what the impact will be. This is because while the Department's overall budget for 2015/16 was announced in the Budget Statement, the Department's individual programme budgets (including

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<sup>16</sup> [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/203549/Reforming\\_SWB\\_-\\_Govt\\_response.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/203549/Reforming_SWB_-_Govt_response.pdf)

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/funding-placements-for-social-work-students>

the social work education budget) for the 2015/16 FY have not yet been set.<sup>18</sup> Funding for 2016/17 onwards will be subject to the Cross-Government Spending Review.

The Department will issue more information on arrangements for the 2015/16 FY early in 2015. There are no plans to move the administration of the SWB and ESG from the NHS Business Services Authority.

### Teaching Partnerships

It is Government policy that social work education funding should develop effective, resilient and expert practitioners. Government is exploring how formal teaching partnerships could develop and consolidate the best of existing partnerships between HEIs and employers as part of a more effective regulatory system for social work. Such arrangements would create better join up between training, learning, research and practice and strengthen joint work to improve the quality of initial and post qualifying education.

A key ambition is to extend partnership responsibility to bridge the transition from education into practice, work and employment itself. To do this, we will look at how future funding arrangements might support partnerships to identify promising students, recruit them to the best courses and placements and enable new social workers to consolidate their skills and knowledge through early employment. Other partnership benefits could include: the best in current arrangements being replicated more widely; greater stability and certainty in the provision of placements; educators and employers planning together for the future workforce in a given area; a clearer 'learning offer' for students; and a more effective allocation of social work education funding. In time, teaching partnerships could improve the coherence between initial training, ASYE, CPD and post qualification education and training arrangements.

### Workforce Planning: Supply and Demand for Social Workers

Professor Croisdale-Appleby highlighted that workforce planning is less developed in social work than in other professions and that this needs to improve (recommendations 1 and 22). Government agrees.

SfC and the Centre for Workforce Intelligence (CfWI) work closely together to support workforce planning and to provide improved workforce intelligence on social workers in the adult social care workforce.

The Department commissioned SfC a number of years ago to collect and analyse data on the adult social care workforce. The National Minimum Data Set for Social Care (NMDS-SC) is an online data collection portal for the adult social care sector and is the recognised leading source of robust workforce intelligence for adult social care and allows SfC to collect detailed

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<sup>18</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/budget-2014-documents>



information online about social care service providers and their employees. This feeds into workforce planning both at national and local level with dashboards being available to compare organisations.<sup>19</sup> In 2011 responsibility for the collection of adult social care workforce returns (the former “SSDS001” return) from Local Authorities transferred from the Health and Social Care Information Centre to SfC. This provides information specifically about the number of social workers employed in Local Authority adult services. In 2014, the Department has commissioned SfC to contract with HESA in order to analyse social work education data.

In addition, in 2010, the Department commissioned CfWI to undertake an analysis of social work education and employment data primarily to inform the number of social work students that were needed. In 2012 the CfWI published an analysis of workforce risks and opportunities for the social work profession.<sup>20</sup> Prior to this, the Social Work Reform Board commissioned CfWI to develop a social work supply and demand model for individual employers to use. The model was launched in October 2011 and was most recently updated in August 2014.<sup>21</sup> CfWI will continue to report to the Department on social work education and employment trends next year.

However, there remain big data gaps, of which the most significant is the demand for social workers and where social workers are currently employed. For example of the approximately 90,000 social workers registered with HCPC, 41,225 are employed in Local Authorities. But it is not possible at the moment to say how many social workers registered with HCPC are working in all settings in roles which require registration as a social worker and in what capacity (either employed, independent or agency). To address this, CfWI are working with the sector to understand more about the demand and supply of social workers as a whole and the Recruitment and Employment Confederation in particular to identify numbers of agency social workers and independent social workers. However the Department has taken note of Professor Croisdale-Appleby's conclusion that: *“We are educating and qualifying too many social workers for the social worker roles available.”* (Recommendation 1).

Government is currently exploring the possibility of improved partnership working between employers and educators, including through proposed teaching partnerships, leading to clear articulation of how many social workers are required and, therefore, how many should be trained, and how many placements employers need to make available. Government is also working with local authorities and HCPC to strengthen its collection of workforce data in order to provide a stronger evidence base for workforce planning.

## Conclusion

Funding for social work education is in support of social work qualifying courses to enable a sufficient supply of high quality students entering the social work profession. Once in the

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<sup>19</sup> <http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/NMDS-SC-intelligence-research-and-innovation/NMDS-SC/NMDS-SC.aspx>

<sup>20</sup> <http://www.cfwi.org.uk/publications/social-workers-workforce-risks-and-opportunities-2012>

<sup>21</sup> The model is available at [www.cfwi.org.uk/files/news/social-worker-supply-and-demand-model](http://www.cfwi.org.uk/files/news/social-worker-supply-and-demand-model)

profession, NQSWs need to complete the ASYE and continue to develop their knowledge, skills and practice.

The Department's programme budgets for 2015 have not been set and further ahead will be subject to the Cross-Government Spending Review. The Department is therefore unable to say what the future level of investment in social work education will be. However, the Government's current aim is to maximise the value for money from our investment and the top priorities for funding are placements and postgraduate bursaries. It is exploring with the sector a proposal for teaching partnerships to strengthen the links between training, learning, research and practice and to help drive the quality of placements.

Responsibility for funding CPD currently rests with the individual social worker and employer. The Department will continue to fund (subject to the TCSW proposal on the CPD framework) the development of CPD materials.

The Department is continuing to invest in workforce planning through commissioning SfC and CfWI.

# Annex 1: Professor Croisdale-Appleby's Terms of Reference

Professor David Croisdale-Appleby OBE

## REVIEW OF SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION

I am writing to ask you to undertake a review of social work education in a personal capacity. I understand that Glen Mason has discussed this with you and that you have agreed in principle to do the review.

### Background

The quality of social work education has been reviewed a number of times. Most recently, the Social Work Task Force (SWTF) reviewed social work education in 2009 and expressed concerns about the quality and variability of quality within social work qualifying courses both in terms of curricula and in students. The view of employers was that newly qualified social workers did not meet their needs. Five of the fifteen recommendations within the final report of the SWTF in 2009 were about education. There were also requests for Government to review the arrangements for the bursary and practice placement funding.

In 2010, following extensive discussions, the Social Work Reform Board (SWRB) consulted on a series of products aimed at implementing these recommendations. The SWRB view was that the qualifying courses should remain generic but with increased specialisation for adults and children.

Responsibility for implementing the education reforms now rests with the College of Social Work, who are introducing an endorsement scheme to incentivise HEIs to implement the reforms alongside the process for registering with the Health and Care Professions Council. Some HEIs have implemented the reforms from the 2012/13 academic year. However, the first graduates under the reformed scheme will not be available for work until 2015 at earliest.

The Department for Education (DfE) have announced that Sir Martin Narey will review children's aspects of social work education.

### Scope of Review

There is a need to undertake a similar review to inform our policy making and to sit alongside the Narey review. It will be a discrete piece of work with a limited time-frame. Although you will have your own views on what should be reviewed, we feel that the review should consider:

- the case for a generic qualifying course and the scope for increased specialisation within the degree;
- the range of institutions offering courses;
- the role of employing organisations in supporting education, including placements;
- further driving up the quality of social workers;
- how to improve social work education's ability to deliver social workers with the right skills and values;
- the scope and appetite for elite entry routes within adults (such as Frontline and Step Up to Social Work); and
- Value for money from the £100 million investment the Department makes in social work education.

We envisage that you will produce an interim report by the end of June and a final report by the end of 2013. We appreciate that the remit of the review is wide and will discuss the relative priority of the scope with you.

In carrying out this review, we would like you to consult with stakeholders, particularly with social work employers and their representative bodies.

I look forward to receiving your reports.

NORMAN LAMB MP  
Minister of Care and Support

## Annex 2: Professor Croisdale-Appleby's Recommendations

Professor Croisdale-Appleby made 22 recommendations in his report, which are reproduced here for ease of reference.

**Recommendation 1:** We are educating and qualifying too many social workers for the social worker roles available. So we need to devise a new strategic workforce planning system which takes account of major strategic drivers in the system of social work, social care and healthcare based on the information from sources such as the National Minimum Data Set-Social Care (NMDS-SC), to determine the future demand for social workers.

**Recommendation 2:** The selection of students for qualifying courses needs to be more consistent nationally, using methodologies similar to the Graduate Management Admissions Test (GMAT) used in selecting entry to Business Schools, which measure attributes such as analytic ability, critical reasoning and quantitative skills.

**Recommendation 3:** Individual HEI's entry selection processes need to be more rigorous and based on assessing candidates' qualities in relation to a new framework of the social worker as a practitioner, the social worker as a professional, and the social worker as a social scientist, and to the domains in the PCF. Attributes such as values, resilience, dealing with uncertainty and conflict should also be assessed for selection for entry. Validated instruments and assessment centres should be used, and I recommend that JUCSWEK, APSW and TCSW should work in partnership to produce a working methodology to deliver this rigorous selection procedure blueprint.

**Recommendation 4:** Excellent social work demands high quality social workers, so entry standards to the profession should be raised significantly. Minimum entry level at undergraduate level should be 300 UCAS points and at Masters Level at least a 2:1 should be mandatory.

**Recommendation 5:** Student numbers should be rebalanced towards postgraduate entry, in line with the evidence from international comparisons as well as in recognition of the challenging nature of both qualification and practice.

**Recommendation 6:** The greatest opportunity to improve the quality of qualifying education lies in having a sufficient number of practice placements of the highest quality and the educational supervision necessary to ensure their potential is delivered. Practice placements settings should be with a wide range of user groups including where there are integrated care pathways that draw on wider community services and resources.

**Recommendation 7:** Stakeholders such as employers providing placements, service-users and carers, practice educators and representatives of newly-emerging organisations key to the future landscape to which social workers will contribute, such as Clinical Commissioning Groups

and Health and Wellbeing Boards, should be encouraged to play a greater part in the selection of students and the design and delivery of education, and I recommend an increase in funding to HEIs to achieve this engagement.

**Recommendation 8:** Social work qualifying education and CPD should equip social workers to play a much greater role in major transformational developments such as the closer integration of healthcare and social care, so knowledge about the capabilities and perspectives of other, related professions should be introduced into both curricula as a clear signal of this direction of travel of the profession in utilising the skills of other professions in social work and contributing social work skills to working in inter-professional partnerships.

**Recommendation 9:** All educational routes to qualification must demonstrate authentic pedagogical evidence that they will provide an in-depth knowledge of the fundamental conceptual frameworks for social work, to ensure that they equip students with the basis for a career in social work with all service user groups and in whatever settings they choose to work.

**Recommendation 10:** All qualifying education should equip newly qualified social workers with the capability to engage in research throughout their career, inculcating an understanding that the ability to carry out research is an essential component in their future professional capability in practice.

**Recommendation 11:** The current Practice Educator Professional Standards (PEPS) should be strengthened, and all practice educators and practice supervisors should have formal qualifications as educators, and in the case of practice educators as formal assessors: the formal training for which should be sited in the proposed new comprehensive continuing professional development (CPD) framework.

**Recommendation 12:** That the regulation of social work education is made more coherent, seamless and rigorous in terms both of standards and processes by bringing together the standards of the HCPC and the endorsement criteria of TCSW into a new, single regulatory regime in which both the rigour of the regulatory process and the stringency of the levels assessed in regulation must be substantially strengthened. HCPC should continue to regulate social work education to these new standards.

**Recommendation 13:** Encouragement should be given to provide innovative routes to social work qualification, such as the fast track routes, and high expectations should be set so that they will enhance the overall quality of students at the point of qualification. Any such initiatives should be subject to a rigorous evaluation process in which action standards are set before such alternative routes are given approval and funding. As an underlying principle, social work education requires a thorough understanding of all stages in the life course, so this should be mandatory for all courses without exception. It is imperative that the opportunity that innovative course structures and content can provide are not invalidated by providing, and being seen to provide, a stripped-down form of social work education – a sort of “social work lite”, but seek to achieve higher learning outcomes than other routes. Their focus should be as a quality-enhancer, not a faster-provider.

**Recommendation 14:** A key condition of the regulation of all courses leading to the professional qualification as a social worker is that all social workers should have the capability to work with all individuals, families, groups and communities and to do so in all settings and situations likely to be encountered, so that generic capability is not sacrificed on the altar of early specialism. There are always beguiling arguments for a move towards pre-qualification specialism, in order more quickly to provide additional practitioner numbers in particular fields, for example currently in mental health and child protection. Great care must be taken to ensure this is not achieved at the expense of sacrificing education for a career in social work for some arguable short term gain in practice readiness. In all comparable professions to social work, the route to high quality professional capability is through a progressive and incremental move from the general to the specialised.

**Recommendation 15:** The first year of post-qualifying work should form a probationary year, at the end of which a Licence to Practise will be awarded to those who pass as a result of a process of independent scrutiny and formal assessment of their capability to practise in the workplace. Such a licence should be mandatory for a social worker to practise in that role. It is appreciated that this is a major step which will require careful planning and considerable financial and personnel resources, and primary legislation. Work to scope it should begin. Meanwhile, any changes in the regulatory and endorsement processes should be undertaken in a way that is consistent with such a direction of travel.

**Recommendation 16:** Whilst the profession moves towards embracing a Licence to Practise, the current ASYE programme should be extended in scope to include all NQSWs entering practice. The requirements asked of employers engaged in the ASYE programme should be subject to a much more exacting and auditable process than is presently the case. Its assessment methodology should be strengthened and made more open to independent validation.

**Recommendation 17:** The overall quality of the educational experience in practice placements must be improved, through the imposition of a much more rigorous audit as a requirement of eligibility for receipt of future ESG payment. Whilst this should use the Quality Assurance in Practice Learning, QAPL, methodology, the QAPL processes should be made more rigorous.

**Recommendation 18:** The quality assurance processes of the HEIs should be more consistent, and where different sources of information are utilised, a systematic methodology of triangulation of evidence should be pursued in order to have reliable Quality Assurance processes throughout social work education.

**Recommendation 19:** Priority should be given to increase significantly the ESG funding support to employers to ensure the provision of high quality placements. This funding should include support for the 30 day *Developing Skills for Practice* module; the involvement of service users and carers in all aspects of educational provision; and the training of practice educators and practice supervisors. As a condition of this financial support, inspection of placements must be much more comprehensive and rigorous than at present, including inspection visits to placements, as well as inspection of the quality assurance processes.



**Recommendation 20:** There is a pressing need for a new comprehensive continuing professional development, CPD, framework for the profession. CPD should be based on the social worker as a practitioner, the social worker as a professional, and the social worker as a social scientist, and related to the domains in the PCF. I recommend that the profession bases its approach on that of the GMC's *Continuing professional development: guidance for all doctors* (GMC 2012) and also utilises some of the high quality social work CPD programme materials of individual HEIs. The development of the profession's CPD programme should involve all the representative organisations of stakeholder groups, including SWEP, JUCSWEC, APSW, SfC, Learn to Care, BASW, ADASS, ADCS and other employers' organisations with the coordination of TCSW. The ASYE should form the initial entry point for the CPD which will be undertaken throughout the career of a social worker in professional practice.

**Recommendation 21:** Once the recommended Licence to Practise has been introduced, then there should be a process of revalidation by which licensed social workers are required to demonstrate that they are fit to practise. Revalidation aims to give confidence to service users that their social worker is being regularly checked by their employer and the professional organisation responsible for awarding the license. Licensed social workers should have to revalidate at least every five years, by having comprehensive formal appraisals that are based on the social worker as a practitioner, the social worker as a professional, and the social worker as a social scientist, and the PCF as the core guidance for social workers.

**Recommendation 22:** Investment should be increased in Strategic Workforce Development, the Education Support Grant, the ASYE programme (to prepare for instigating a Licence to Practise), and in Continuing Professional Development. The Student Bursary funding for postgraduates should be maintained but made subject to a means test, and undergraduate bursaries should be reduced in numbers and amount, or gradually phased out.



## Annex 3: Glossary

AMHP	Approved Mental Health Practitioner
ASYE	Assessed and Supported Year in Employment
Authority	Professional Standards Authority for Health and Social Care
BIA	Best Interest Assessor
CfWI	Centre for Workforce Intelligence
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
Department	Department of Health
DfE	Department for Education
ESG	Education Support Grant
GSCC	General Social Care Council
HCPC	Health and Care Professions Council
HEI	Higher Education Institution
HESA	Higher Education Statistics Agency
KSS	Knowledge and Skills Statement
NHS BSA	National Health Service Business Services Authority
NMDS-SC	National Minimum Data Set – Social Care
NQSW	Newly Qualified Social Worker
PCF	Professional Capabilities Framework
PG	Postgraduate
QAA	Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education
SETs	Standards of Education and Training
SfC	Skills for Care
SOPs	Standards of Proficiency
SWB	Social Work Bursary
TCSW	The College of Social Work
UCAS	Universities and Colleges Admissions Service
UG	Undergraduate